

The background of the entire page is a close-up photograph of several turnips. The turnips have a vibrant purple or magenta skin with white or light-colored bases. They are arranged on a blue-painted wooden surface that shows signs of wear, with some of the paint peeling away to reveal the natural wood grain. The lighting is bright, highlighting the textures of the turnip skins and the wood.

THE STORY THAT GREW

CHARACTER BUILDING STORIES
Easy Reading

Farmer Brown was not happy. He had been told that someone had gone to his turnip field and stolen a whole wagonload of turnips.



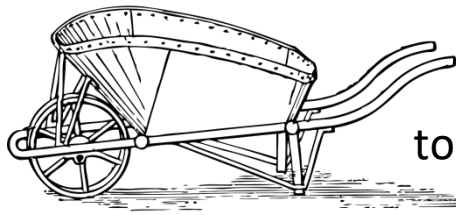
That someone was a man named Palmer. Many people in town were telling the story, so it must be true. Farmer Brown was not happy to lose his turnips and he decided he would report Palmer to the police. He would make sure that Palmer was punished for stealing his turnips.

But first he must find out the whole story. So Farmer Brown went to see Molly Saunders, the woman who washed the clothes. She had been busy telling the story to everyone so he would hear from her what had happened.



But Molly told him she had never said Palmer had taken a whole wagonload of turnips. She had only said he had taken a cart load of turnips from the field. But she had not seen it herself. She had heard the story from Dame Hodson, the woman who went around selling little things to the people in town. So Farmer Brown went to see Dame Hodson.

But Dame Hodson said Molly Saunders was making the story worse than it really was.



She never had told Molly that he took a cart load of turnips. She had only said he took a wheelbarrow load of turnips. But she also had not seen him do it. She had been told about it by Jenkins. Jenkins was the tailor, the man who made clothing.

So Farmer Brown went to talk to Jenkins the tailor. But Jenkins said that he had not told Dame Hodson that Palmer had taken a wheelbarrow load of turnips. He had only said Palmer had pulled up several turnips. But he did not know how many because he had not seen Palmer do it. He had heard the story from Tom Slack, the man who did the plowing.



Now Farmer Brown began to wonder where this story was going to end. Palmer had not taken a wagonload of turnips. He had only pulled up some turnips. But he must get to the end of the story so Farmer Brown went to talk to Tom Slack.

But Tom Slack said he had never seen Palmer pull up turnips, neither had he said he pulled up several turnips. He had only said to Jenkins that Palmer had pulled up one turnip. But he had not seen it himself. Barnes the barber had told him about it.

Farmer Brown was getting tired of this. How could so many people tell stories that were not true. But he still had to find the end of the story. So off he went to talk to Barnes, the barber.

When Farmer Brown told Barnes the stories and asked what he had said to Tom Slack, Barnes was very surprised. How could people keep telling stories like that that were totally not true. Barnes told Farmer Brown that all he had ever said to Tom Slack was that “for all he knew Palmer was as likely as any of the other neighbors to pull up a turnip.”

And from what Barnes had said to Tom Slack grew a whole big story that made Palmer, a man who had done nothing wrong look like a thief.



So what are the lessons that can be learned from this story:

First, just because we hear something doesn't make it true. Many times when people tell you something about someone else it is a story like the turnip story. There may not be any truth in it, or it may only have a

little truth with a lot of made up parts. You should always hear what the person who the story is about has to say. There might be things that happened that only they know about. You should never believe something just because someone says something about someone else.

Second, we should be careful what we say. What we say should always be completely true, because we can cause lots of problems when we say things that are not true. The Bible says our tongue is like a fire (**James 3:6**).



Just like a little fire can grow into a big fire that destroys many houses saying something a little bit not true about someone else can grow into a bigger story that can hurt many people.

That is why the Bible says, *“Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile [lies].”* **Psalm 34:13**
Ask Jesus to help you control your tongue so you will only say true things.



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